

STATE OF INDIANA

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE
PHONE (317) 232-3775
FAX (317) 232-8779



INDIANA GOVERNMENT CENTER NORTH
100 NORTH SENATE AVENUE N1058 (B)
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204

RESOLUTION # 2008-01

RESOLUTION DECLARING THE NEED TO REASSESS REAL PROPERTY IN LAPORTE COUNTY, INDIANA AS OF MARCH 1, 2006

WHEREAS, the Department of Local Government Finance ("Department") is charged with maintaining a just and equitable valuation of real property throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, the Department finds the accurate assessment of real property to be an indispensable requirement for a fair and equitable system of property taxation; and

WHEREAS, the Department has adopted 50 IAC 21, an administrative rule that requires the annual adjustment of all property values in accordance with Ind. Code § 6-1.1-4-4.5 beginning with the March 1, 2006 assessment; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2007, the Department approved the sales-assessment ratio study submitted by LaPorte County ("County") for the March 1, 2006 assessment date; and

WHEREAS, on September 6, 2007, the Department, based upon the evidence available at that time, informed the County it would not be subject to a reassessment order; and

WHEREAS, on October 19, 2007, the Department received a sales-assessment ratio study conducted by analyst Robert C. Denne entitled "Sales Chasing in LaPorte

County for Pay 2007 Assessments," ("Denne study") for LaPorte County property owner William H. Wendt; and

WHEREAS, on October 22, 2007, Commissioner Cheryl A. W. Musgrave met with Mr. Wendt and his attorney, Mr. Tom Atherton to discuss the Denne study; and

WHEREAS, on October 29, 2007, Mr. Atherton filed a formal complaint or request with the Department on behalf of Mr. Wendt asking that the Department order a reassessment of all property in LaPorte County based upon the results of the Denne study; and

WHEREAS, on November 7, 2007, the Department contacted LaPorte County Assessor Carol McDaniel to request that the County respond to the Denne study; and

WHEREAS, on November 28, 2007, the County through its vendor responded to the Denne study; and

WHEREAS, on December 4, 2007, the Department requested that Mr. Wendt provide the Department with more data used in the Denne study; and

WHEREAS, on December 21, 2007, the Department notified both the County and Mr. Wendt of the process the Department would use in conducting its analysis of the County's ratio study and the Denne study; and

WHEREAS, on January 17, 2008, the Department sent letters to both the County and Mr. Wendt regarding non-compliant County data and data previously requested from the Denne study that had not yet been received by the Department; and

WHEREAS, on January 24, 2008, the Department received the requested data from the Denne study, which allowed the Department to study and analyze the data; and

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2008, the 2006-pay-2007 Auditor/tax billing data was deemed compliant with state standards by the Department and the Legislative Services Agency, which allowed the Department to study and analyze the data as promised in the December 21, 2007 letter to Mr. Wendt and the County; and

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2008, the Department conducted a public hearing in LaPorte, Indiana to discuss the accuracy, uniformity, and equity of the assessment of real property in LaPorte County for 2006-pay-2007; with a particular emphasis on the Denne study in accordance with the Department's authority under Ind. Code § 6-1.1-4-31 to periodically check the conduct of work required to be performed by local officials under 50 IAC 21 (i.e., annual adjustment, or "trending," administrative rule) and other property assessment activities in the county, as determined by the Department; and

WHEREAS, the March 6, 2008 public meeting lasted over three hours and nearly thirty (30) LaPorte County property taxpayers voiced concerns regarding assessments; and

WHEREAS, on April 10, 2008, the Department completed an independent evaluation of LaPorte County's 2006-pay-2007 ratio study by creating a new ratio study with the 2006-pay-2007 Auditor/tax billing data and through the use of a Mann-Whitney statistical test to determine whether there was horizontal equity between sold and unsold improved residential parcels in LaPorte County ("Department study"); and

WHEREAS, the data for the Department study was obtained from three sources:

(a) the approved ratio study of LaPorte County, which included 2005 as well as 2006 assessed values for sold properties; and

(b) two datasets from the Department listing the assessed value for 2005 and 2006 of all unsold properties in LaPorte County; and

(c) the 2006-pay-2007 county auditor/tax billing data; and

WHEREAS, per the International Association of Assessing Officers' (IAAO) *Mass Appraisal of Real Property* and the 1999 IAAO Standard on Ratio Studies, Standard 10.3, a Mann-Whitney statistical test was conducted on sold and unsold properties in each township to determine whether horizontal equity had been violated by the County for 2006-pay-2007 assessments; and

WHEREAS, the Department's Mann-Whitney study compared the percentage change in assessed value for two groups of parcels in LaPorte County: (1) those parcels used in the original ratio study, and (2) all other parcels in the county which had not been sold since January 1, 2004. The comparison was done on the township level, and properties which were newly constructed or had changed in property class during the comparison years were not included. For expediency, only improved residential parcels were studied; and

WHEREAS, the Department study revealed that in nine (9) out of nineteen (19) tested townships, sold residential-improved parcels were assessed differently than unsold residential-improved parcels; and

WHEREAS, the townships at issue are: Center, Galena, Hanna, Kankakee, Michigan, New Durham, Scipio, Springfield, and Washington; and

WHEREAS, with three exceptions, these results agreed with the findings of the Denne study; and

WHEREAS, the Department's Mann-Whitney test findings found a significant violation of the IAAO standard regarding horizontal equity in property assessment (1999 IAAO Standard on Ratio Studies, Standard 10); and thus, a violation of 50 IAC 21-3-1 by the County for 2006-pay-2007; and

WHEREAS, the findings of the Department's ratio study, which was created using the County's final 2006-pay-2007 ratio study matched with the LaPorte County Auditor's tax billing data file for 2006-pay-2007, found that the assessed values on several of the parcels the County used in their ratio study did not match the assessed values billed by the LaPorte County Auditor; and

WHEREAS, the Department's new ratio study found the following non-conforming medians, coefficient of dispersions (CODs), and price-related differentials (PRDs): Springfield (improved residential) outside COD range; Noble (improved residential) outside PRD range; Galena (vacant residential) outside PRD range; Hanna (vacant residential) outside PRD range; Hudson (vacant residential) outside median, COD, and PRD ranges; Noble (vacant residential) outside PRD range; Scipio (vacant residential) outside PRD range; Springfield (vacant residential) outside PRD range; Center (improved commercial) outside PRD range; Michigan (improved commercial) outside PRD range; and LaPorte County, as a whole, (vacant commercial) outside COD range; and

WHEREAS, the findings that sales chasing probably occurred in the Department's Mann-Whitney test were disputed by the County through its vendor on the basis of the six (6) year change in the valuation date from January 1, 1999 (for the March 1, 2005 assessment date) to January 1, 2005 (for the March 1, 2006 assessment date) and

what the vendor deemed as previous "reassessment activities" undertaken by the vendor in LaPorte County since 2004; and

WHEREAS, the County through its vendor disputed the results of the Department's new ratio study and provided a separate analysis that indicated "possible 2006 assessment issues (outside of a sales chasing argument) in two areas: Hanna TWP and Hudson TWP vacant residential property," but cleared the other townships of any non-conformity with 50 IAC 21 that were cited in the Department's ratio study; and

WHEREAS, the County through its vendor suggested at the April 16, 2008 meeting at the Department that the final assessed value is the only important element of the assessment, not grade, condition or other elements, and that studies of changes in individual elements of assessed value (grade, condition, effective age, etc...), whether made intentionally or otherwise, are "irrelevant"; and

WHEREAS, the County through its vendor argued that its view on "bottom line values" is supported by decisions of the Indiana Tax Court, which in the *Eckerling v. Wayne Twp Assessor*, 841 N.E.2d 674 (Ind. Tax Ct. 2006) decision, ruled that "to the extent that an assessor may err in applying the regulations [2002 Real Property Assessment Manual, Guidelines, and 50 IAC 2.3] correctly, this will not necessarily invalidate the assessment so long as the assessment accurately reflects the property's market value-in-use," and that the current property assessment system, as opposed to the old assessment system, shifts the focus from mere methodology to determining whether the assessed value is actually correct; and

WHEREAS, the Department believes the alleged intentional manipulation of any assessment elements by the County through its vendor, if satisfactorily demonstrated by

the evidence, is clearly distinguishable from the unintentional assessing errors referred to in the Indiana Tax Court cases provided by the vendor to the Department; and

WHEREAS, on April 24, 2008, the County through its counsel offered proposals to avoid a county-wide reassessment for 2006-pay-2007; and

WHEREAS, upon review of all available data and information submitted to the Department by both parties, the Department hereby finds compelling evidence of the aforementioned assessment errors, including but not limited to: that sold and unsold improved residential parcels in LaPorte County may have been treated differently and that the County through its vendor may have intentionally changed assessment elements, such as effective age and land values, in order to reach a "bottom line value"; and

WHEREAS, the Department, for the aforementioned reasons, declares its belief that it is necessary to reassess all or a portion of the real property located within real property in LaPorte County, Indiana; and

WHEREAS, the Department shall hold a hearing concerning the necessity for the reassessment at the LaPorte County courthouse or its adjacent annex; and

WHEREAS, after the hearing, the Department may order any reassessment it deems necessary.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Department that there is sufficient cause to believe it necessary to reassess all or a portion of the real property in LaPorte County, Indiana for the March 1, 2006, assessment date in accordance with Ind. Code § 6-1.1-4-9.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a public hearing on this Resolution and the reassessment of LaPorte County, Indiana for the March 1, 2006, assessment date shall

be held on Thursday, May 15, 2008, at 5:00 p.m. (CDT) in the Assembly Rooms at the LaPorte County Complex, 809 State Street, LaPorte in compliance with Ind. Code § 6-1.1-4-9. Notice of the public hearing shall be published in accordance with Ind. Code § 6-1.1-4-10.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Department of Local Government of the State of Indiana on the 1st day of May, 2008.

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

 TJR
5/1/08

Cheryl A.W. Musgrave, Commissioner

STATE OF INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

I, Timothy J. Rushenberg, General Counsel for the Department of Local Government Finance, hereby certify that the above is a passed and adopted resolution of the Commissioner of the Department of Local Government Finance made this date in the above-entitled matter and that the Commissioner has personally signed the same under her statutory authority.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL of this Commissioner on this the 1st day of May, 2008


Timothy J. Rushenberg, General Counsel

STATE OF INDIANA

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE
PHONE (317) 232-3777
FAX (317) 232-8779



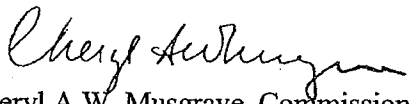
INDIANA GOVERNMENT CENTER NORTH
100 NORTH SENATE AVENUE N1058(B)
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204

Notice of Public Hearing on Indiana Department of Local Government Resolution #2008-01

The Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (Department), in order to maintain a just and equitable valuation of real property, adopted Resolution #2008-01 on May 1, 2008, declaring its belief that it is necessary to reassess all or a portion of the real property located within LaPorte County, Indiana for the March 1, 2006 assessment date. Pursuant to the requirements of Indiana Code §§ 6-1.1-4-9, -10, notice is hereby given that on Thursday, May 15, 2008, at 5:00 p.m.(CDT), in the Assembly Rooms at the LaPorte County Complex, 809 State Street, LaPorte, Indiana, the Department will hold a public hearing concerning the necessity for reassessment. A copy of Resolution #2008-01 is available on the Department's website at www.in.gov/dlgef. After the hearing, the Department may order any reassessment deemed necessary, specifying the time within which the reassessment shall be completed and the date that the reassessment will become effective.

Pursuant to Indiana Code § 5-14-1.5, the hearing is open to the public. Parties interested in participating in the public hearing are encouraged to attend, and may speak or submit written statements expressing their specific or general concerns. Written comments may be submitted in advance to Timothy J. Rushenberg, General Counsel, Department of Local Government Finance, Indiana Government Center North, 100 N. Senate Ave., Rm. N1058, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

Signed this 1st day of May, 2008.


Cheryl A.W. Musgrave, Commissioner
Department of Local Government Finance

Advertising Receipt

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Notice of Public
Hearing on Indiana
Department of
Local Government
Resolution #2008-01

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Total Due 18.18

**Notice of Public
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Department of
Local Government
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Cheryl A.W. Musgrave
Commissioner
Department of Local
Government Finance

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1

I hereby certify that the foregoing account is just and correct, that the amount claimed is legally due, after allowing all just credits, and that no part of the same has been paid.

Date:

May 7th, 2008

Title:

Legal Clerk

PUBLISHER'S AFFIDAVIT

State of Indiana)

) ss:

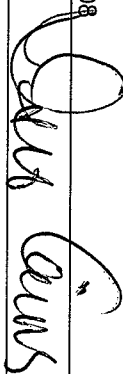
LaPorte County)

Personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county and state, the undersigned Isis Leon-Cains
sworn, says that she is Director of Classified Advertising

THE NEWS-DISPATCH

who, being duly
of
, newspaper of

general circulation printed and published in the English language in
the (city) of Michigan City in state and county afore-
said, and that the printed matter attached hereto is a true copy, which
was duly published in said paper for ONE (1) time (s), the
dates of publication being as follows:

May 5th, 2008

Subscribed and sworn to before me this

7thday of May

2008

Cindy Galligan

County of Residence: La Porte

My Commission expires: August 1st, 2014

The LaPorte Herald-Argus
701 State Street
LaPorte, IN 46350
(219)362-2161

Account # 3101000

Dept. of Local Government Finance
Bharati Desai
100 N Senate Ave. N1058 (B)
Indianapolis, IN. 46204

Legal Advertising

May 5,2008

Public Hearing
Local Gov't Resolution #2008-01
61 Lines \$17.08

Federal ID # 35-1907691

ite of Indiana, County of LaPorte, ss:

AFFIDAVIT

LaPorte County)
State of Indiana) SS:

Personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county and state, the undersigned Julie Frank, who being duly sworn says that she is of competent age and is Assistant Business Manager of the LaPorte Herald-Argus, a daily newspaper which for at least five (5) consecutive years has been published in the city of LaPorte, county of LaPorte, State of Indiana, and which during that time, has been a newspaper of general circulation, printed in the English language and entered, authorized and accepted by the post office department of the United States of America as mailable matter of the second-class as defined by the Act of Congress of the United States of March 3, 1879 and that the printed matter attached hereto is a true copy, which was duly published in said newspaper 1 time, the date of publication being as follows: May 5, 2008

Julie Frank
Affiant

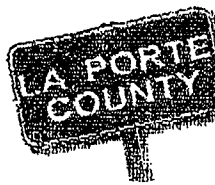
Subscribed and sworn to before me, a Notary Public in and for said county, this 5th day of May, 2008.

Publisher's Fee \$17.08

Carlena Hellembe
My commission expires April 10, 2016

Notice of Public Hearing on
Indiana Department of Local
Government Resolution #2008-01
The Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (Department), in order to maintain a just and equitable valuation of real property, adopted Resolution #2008-01 on May 1, 2008, declaring its belief that it is necessary to reassess all or a portion of the real property located within LaPorte County, Indiana for the March 1, 2006 assessment date. Pursuant to the requirements of Indiana Code § 6-1.1-4-9, 10, notice is hereby given that on Thursday, May 15, 2008, at 5:00 p.m.(CDT), in the Assembly Rooms at the LaPorte County Complex, 809 State Street, LaPorte, Indiana, the Department will hold a public hearing concerning the necessity for reassessment. A copy of Resolution #2008-01 is available on the Department's website at www.in.gov/dlgr. After the hearing, the Department may order any reassessment deemed necessary, specifying the time within which the reassessment shall be completed and the date that the reassessment will become effective. Pursuant to Indiana Code § 5-4-4-1.5, the hearing is open to the public. Parties interested in

participating in the public hearing are encouraged to attend, and may speak or submit written statements expressing their specific or general concerns. Written comments may be submitted in advance to Timothy J. Rushenber, General Counsel, Department of Local Government Finance, Indiana Government Center North, 100 N. Senate Ave., Rm. N1058, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204. Cheryl A.W. Musgrave, Commissioner, Department of Local Government Finance



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TO: 317-232-8779
Department Of Local
Government Finance
ATTN: Kathy Walter

FROM: Lory Eisermann

Direct: 219-326-4747
Fax: 219-362-2166
Email: classified@heraldargus.com

DATE: Tuesday, May 13, 2008 TIME:
Total pages including cover sheet: 2

Here is the proof of publication you requested for the legal notice that ran on May 5, 2008.
Thank You,
Lory

State of Indiana, County of LaPorte ss.
I, the undersigned, Clerk of said County, do hereby certify that the within and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original as the same appears in the files of said County.

of Indiana, County of LaPorte ss.

AFFIDAVIT

I, of one County)
State of Indiana) ss.

Personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county and state, the undersigned, Julie Frank, who, being duly sworn, says that she is of competent age and is Assistant Business Manager of the LaPorte Herald-Army, a daily newspaper which, for at least five (5) consecutive years has been published in the city of LaPorte, county of LaPorte, State of Indiana, and which during that time, has been a newspaper of general circulation printed in the English language and entered, audited and accepted by the post office department of the United States of America as mailable matter of the second class as defined by the Act of Congress of the United States of March 3, 1879, and that the printed matter attached hereto is a true copy, which was duly published in said newspaper on the date of publication being as follows: May 5, 2008.

Notary Public

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a Notary Public, in and for said county, this 5th day of May, 2008.
Publisher's Fee \$17.08

Commission expires June 15, 2008

**STATE OF INDIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

THIRD FLOOR STATE HOUSE
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204

SCOTT D. PELATH
1824 MANHATTAN STREET
MICHIGAN CITY, IN 46360

COMMITTEES:
RULES AND LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON JOINT RULES
PUBLIC POLICY
ELECTIONS AND APPORTIONMENT

May 7, 2008

**The Honorable Mitchell E. Daniels
Governor, State of Indiana
Room 206, Statehouse
Indianapolis, IN 46204**

Dear Governor Daniels:

I respectfully request that your office fully investigate the performance of the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) under the leadership of Commissioner Cheryl Musgrave. The agency has compounded a number of property tax costs, and the erratic and unpredictable management of the DLGF has greatly shaken my confidence.

In my observation, the DLGF does not make situations better; it frequently makes them worse.

The agency has been threatening LaPorte County with reassessment for some time. They now are poised to carry out their intentions. Unfortunately, after months of foot-dragging, the end results are: 1) my constituents still have not received the tax rebates we both supported; 2) current tax projections based on HEA 1001 will no longer be relevant; 3) this reassessment will cost the taxpayers a lot of money; 4) we will have a whole new round of property tax winners and losers; and 5) folks are growing more confused and less trusting than ever.

My county's dealings with this agency seem to be emblematic of problems endured by others around the state. Here is a summary of issues that have led to delays, vacillation, and more delays:

*** The DLGF first approved LaPorte County's 2006 pay 2007 ratio study on March 16, 2007 after the agency rejected an independently performed LaPorte County ratio study from a paid consultant named Robert Denne.**

*** Later in the year, after your order that the DLGF review all 92 counties' assessments following the Marion County outcry, Ms. Musgrave specifically told LaPorte County on September 7, 2007 that there was no need for a reassessment. She commended LaPorte County officials.**

*** County officials relied on those public statements. As a result, they were stunned to discover that Ms. Musgrave met privately with Mr. Denne to review yet another of his studies. The DLGF did not give local officials notice of the meeting, and the DLGF had no apparent guidelines, procedures, or criteria for its conduct.**

*** A DLGF staff person reportedly left the agency and became a paid consultant for plaintiffs suing over the county's assessments.**

*** Rather than conduct a speedy and efficient review of the latest competing study, the DLGF hesitated and procrastinated for months -- finally issuing a ratio study of its own on**

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the eve of a scheduled public hearing in LaPorte on March 5, 2008. The DLGF's study was withdrawn by the agency within hours of it being shown to LaPorte County. Copies were never given to the public.

* The agency tried a second time to issue a ratio study on April 14, 2008, and at Commissioner Musgrave's insistence, the parties advocating the competing studies held an unrecorded meeting on April 16, 2008.

* At another unrecorded conference call on April 24, 2008, Commissioner Musgrave reportedly refused LaPorte County's request for an in-person session like the one she permitted the plaintiffs.

* On the same conference call, Commissioner Musgrave denied that her agency had prevented the distribution of taxpayer rebate checks. However, County Auditor Teresa Shuter and County Treasurer Ken Layton stated her agency issued a memo specifically prohibiting counties from distributing rebate checks if their assessments were under challenge.

* Six months of DLGF delays and indecisiveness have passed since plaintiffs filed a petition for reassessment. Despite two prior decisions in support of the county's assessments, taxpayers have not -- and apparently, will not -- receive their tax relief anytime soon.

This constant waffling and wavering has added to the burdens of LaPorte County taxpayers. In addition to the paralyzing uncertainty, expected reassessment costs, late rebate checks, and constant borrowing for operations, I also understand the DLGF has not acted on LaPorte County's 2007 ratio study, which was submitted six weeks ago. This year's tax bills are likely to be delayed once again.

Furthermore, after reflecting upon this situation, I believe the following questions demand attention:

1) Why would the DLGF leave an entire, large county in limbo for over six months?

2) LaPorte County employed The Nexus Group, which has completed over eighty DLGF-approved ratio studies in Indiana. If their work is called into question, what are the statewide implications? Under what circumstances will they be opened to scrutiny? If a private citizen questions a ratio study, what will it take for that citizen to get an audience with the Commissioner?

3) What was the DLGF's role in delaying tax rebate checks? If, as they claim, they have no role in the matter, under what authority were they giving any direction at all?

Perhaps the most frustrating thing for me, personally, is that the neither the Commissioner nor the DLGF seem to acknowledge any fallibility at all. After several formal inquiries, I find their answers to be wanting, and they frequently appear to "wash their hands" of issues over which they clearly have great influence. Whenever the questions become too inconvenient, they simply point back at the people they regulate. In short, they cannot have a lot of power and little responsibility.

I have expressed my frustrations to the DLGF directly. In return, I may have felt better if I would have received a "we could have done better" or a "we've made a few mistakes, too" or even a "we'll make sure this never happens again." But I haven't.

I recognize that for governors of both parties, the oversight of local government finance historically has been a challenge. I also think the General Assembly must do far more to hold the DLGF accountable, and I believe the legislature should thoroughly exercise its oversight responsibilities.

Please know that while I sometimes have disagreed with you about details of tax reform, but I have never doubted your demand for excellence in your work. I also know you are a tough boss who believes the first order of government is to do no harm, and I am certain you will take these concerns seriously.

As always, thank you for your dedicated attention to the dilemmas facing LaPorte County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Scott D. Pelath". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Scott" being more prominent than the last name "Pelath".

**Scott D. Pelath
State Representative**

**cc: Speaker B. Patrick Bauer
President Pro Tempore David Long
State Sen. Ed Charbonneau
State Sen. Jim Arnold
State Rep. Tom Dermody
State Rep. Nancy Dembowski**



Thursday, May 08, 2008

County Bracing For Possible Reassessment *Any reassessment will impact entire county, officials say.*

Laurie Wink
The News-Dispatch

Thursday, May 08, 2008

LA PORTE - County officials are huddling to discuss the implications of a 2006 property reassessment likely to be ordered by the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance.

The DLGF decision won't be made until after a May 15 public hearing, to be held at 5 p.m. in the main meeting room of the La Porte County Complex.

County Assessor Carol McDaniel, County Auditor Teresa Shuter and County Treasurer Ken Layton met Monday to make preparations for a reassessment process encompassing portions of or the entire county.

Layton told The News-Dispatch the impact will be the same, whether a partial or full reassessment is required.

"Let's say, hypothetically, they tell us we have to reassess Prairie Township," Layton said. "That will change all of the rates and every single tax bill."

Whether or not county officials want a reassessment, if the DLGF orders one, "it's a done deal," Shuter said.

Not according to La Porte County Attorney Shaw Friedman.

He said Wednesday he filed a petition with the Indiana Tax Court to fight any reassessment order. Friedman claims taxpayers are "the losers" in a reassessment because it would delay issuing 2006 homestead rebate checks and future year's tax bills.

"We will undertake all reasonable and necessary steps to prevent the state from imposing a costly reassessment on County taxpayers," Friedman said. "We urge taxpayers to let the DLGF know that they don't want a reassessment. We want tax rebate checks instead."

According to Shuter, homestead rebates can't be issued until the 2006 property tax issue is settled, but provisional checks can go out. Shuter said assessment data for 2007 tax bills, payable this year, is ready to be rolled from the assessor's office.

The county plans to issue provisional property tax bills in July for half the total amount due. Shuter said the DLGF provisional 2007 property tax bills can be based on 2006 taxes, even though they are being reassessed. The bills are issued from the date issued.

Layton said the second 2007 tax bill is supposed to be issued in November, but he doesn't think that date is realistic for a reassessment. The second tax bill will have to be reconciled with any new values determined during a reassessment.

This year, Layton said, county taxpayers could receive the two tax bills for 2007 plus a new tax bill for 2006, a hom for 2006, and either a refund or tax bill for the reconciled November tax statement - all within 2008.

"It's an accounting nightmare," Layton said. "There are major ramifications for this thing."

Friedman has said a reassessment could cost to \$2 million the county doesn't have. But Layton and Shuter both no idea what a reassessment will cost.

The county has about \$2 million in a reassessment fund and a \$10 million emergency reserve fund, originally set u 2000-01 to cover unexpected developments. The fund has been used twice since then, to cover late tax payments ir 2007 rather than borrowing money and paying interest.

Shuter said the DLGF will prohibit the Nexus Group from further involvement, requiring the county to hire an outs

Layton said he won't be speaking at the DLGF meeting next week because he will be on a long-planned vacation. B get on with whatever is required.

"Nobody wants to see a reassessment, but if things are wrong, let's get it fixed," Layton said.

Contact Laurie Wink at lwink@thenewsd Dispatch.com.

Related Links

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May 5, 2008

Mr. Timothy Rushenberg
General Counsel
Department of Local Government Finance
Indiana Government Center North
100 N. Senate Ave., Room N1058
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Mr. Rushenberg:

I am writing this letter to support the call for a reassessment of all of La Porte County, or at the very least beach communities that border Lake Michigan.

On February 5th I filed a petition to appeal the assessment of my property in Michiana Shores Indiana. My property taxes for 2006 doubled. In my opinion the increase in my tax was based upon a faulty assessment of my property by the Nexus Group.

Without an internal inspection of my property they assessed its value as comparable to houses recently sold in my neighborhood. Those houses they undoubtedly compared with mine were twice as large, double the square footage of living space. The assessment of my property was supposed to be on the basis of fair market value. How could they conclude that my house, half the size of those recently sold in my neighborhood, was comparable?

A huge number of property owners in La Porte County, like me, have filed petitions. A simple solution would be to reassess all of us in a more competent way.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Howard Jablon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Howard" being more prominent than the last name "Jablon".

Howard Jablon

3714 Ponchartrain Trail
Michiana Shores, IN
46360-1177

May 4th, 2008

Timothy Rushenberg, Gen'l. Counsel
Dept. of Local Government Finance
Indiana Government Center North
100 N. Senate Ave., RM N1058
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Mr. Rushenberg:

Thank you for giving the public an opportunity to voice their opinion prior to the May 15th meeting regarding a possible property reassessment for LaPorte County. I am employed with LaPorte County and have a completely different view than the people with whom I work. Some people are content to leave the assessment as is, despite knowing it was done poorly. They have their own agendas', and a reassessment is not on it. And I do not feel that I have the freedom to express my opinion without penalty, so I will not be attending the meeting.

The job done by Nexus was not sufficient enough to provide accurate property values for LaPorte County. After learning of some of the assessed values of homes of people I know, I researched the assessed values of two hundred homes. (Having been a Realtor for several years, I did my share of competitive market analysis.) Out of the two hundred homes, one hundred eighty-one of the homes were grossly **under assessed**. Naturally, no one is going to hear from anyone whose home is under assessed.

I firmly believe there should be a total reassessment. What I don't understand, however, is why a reassessment would cost the tax payers two million dollars, according to Shaw Friedman, when the company that was hired to do the job failed miserably. (See article enclosed.) I'm sure Nexus was paid handsomely for doing the job **right**. And as far as Nexus having had success in other Counties, perhaps there just aren't enough "Mr. Wendts" to go around. In any event, I believe a total reassessment is called for, whether it's for the year 2006, pay 2007, or for the year 2007, pay 2008. That, of course, would be your call.

I get the overwhelming feeling that LaPorte County wants to call its own shots on this matter, and there is a big power struggle going on between it (LP Co.) and the entity that is suppose to govern this matter – DLGF. And "doing what's right" just doesn't enter the picture, unfortunately.

Lastly, I would just like to say, "KUDOS to Cheryl Musgrave and the DLGF for realizing this mess and speaking up about it. I hope you do what is right and order a complete reassessment.

Respectfully,

Concerned Citizen of LaPorte County

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C C of LP", written in dark ink.

2911 Roslyn Trail
Long Beach, Indiana 46360
May 6, 2008

Mr. Timothy Rushenberg
General Council
Department of Local Government Finance
Indiana Government Center
100 N. Senate Avenue
Room N1058
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Dear Mr. Rushenberg:

I feel a reassessment for 2006 property taxes payable in 2007 for LaPorte County should be done.

My residence was built in 1958 and purchased by my husband and myself in 1970. I am a retired widow on a fixed income who has resided in my home for 38 years. I have a nice home but have not made any major improvements or changes to it other than regular upkeep changes. According to news articles, I understand that property taxes were to be increased an average of 24% statewide. Mine were increased 65% and according to the valuation record which I obtained from the Assessor's Office they will again go up another 67% for 2007 taxes payable in 2008. My mortgage payment increased more than double what I previously paid.

I feel a certain part of LaPorte County, that area north of Route 12, were the ones particularly hurt by the reassessment process when newspaper articles stated that 90% of the property taxes in LaPorte County remained the same or were even reduced. We were the other 10% and they really socked it to us. I feel we were discriminated against. The tax increase was not equitable to all. My property is not located on the lake; in fact, I am located 4 blocks from the lake. In the 2900 block of Roslyn Trail, there are 11 full time residents (of which 4 are retirees) and 4 are temporary residents.

The LaPorte County Assessor's office has a budget of more than \$1 million to conduct assessment-related business which would be used to cover the reassessment. She had previously used this fund to pay a private company to move office furniture from the courthouse to the new annex while other county offices used jail inmates to accomplish this. Another thing, is the County Assessor paying the salaries of 2 attorneys (Atty William Hedge and Atty Scott Friedman) to handle their legal matters?

- 2 -

Please give some consideration to doing a reassessment in LaPorte County.

Very truly yours,

Florence G. Doster

Florence G. Doster

May 5,2008

Timothy Rushenberg
General Counsel
Department of Local Government Finance
Indiana Government center
160 Senate Avenue
Room N1058
Indianapolis, In 46204

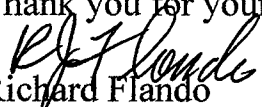
Taxes La Porte County

I am outraged that the attorney representing the LaPorte County Assessor can say that we are wasting taxpayers money by having a reassessment ordered. We should just allow the County Assessor to issue bogus assessment and not challenge them to save taxpayers money. What am I paying my taxes with, somebody else money.

I have a forty foot lot on the lake and the assessment has tripled in the last three years. Why, because the assessor uses sale figures from other 40 foot lots, but does not take in consideration that on those lots you maybe able to build because it has sewers available and others you can not because you can not get a septic permit. Big difference in value. Same can be said for my house, the taxes have more than doubled in the last two years, Why? One sale of a home on the lake side does not indicate the value of all properties. There has to be more than one sale that sets the market value. Did anybody look into the sale and determine why it sold for higher than a normal price. The mere fact that homes are listed at far out value could only mean wishful thinking on the owners part. A listing is not a sale.

If one looks at the assessment along the lake there are different values assessed for homes and lots. There is no consideration that some lot have city sewers and others do not. That makes big difference in value.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter, an Indiana tax payer.


Richard Flando
Long Beach, In..

Rushenberg, Tim

From: Musgrave, Cheryl
Sent: Thursday, May 08, 2008 6:44 PM
To: fredb@sunmandirect.com
Subject: RE: Re-Assessment of Michigan Township, LaPorte County

Thank you for letting me know your views, Mr. Broitman. As you know, there is a public hearing scheduled for May 15 at 5 pm to consider the question of an order for reassessment. The decision will be made after that hearing.

Cheryl Musgrave

From: Fred Broitman [mailto:fredb@sunmandirect.com]
Sent: Thu 5/8/2008 2:13 PM
To: Musgrave, Cheryl
Cc: Wood, Barry; Rushenberg, Tim; Governor Mitch Daniels
Subject: Re-Assessment of Michigan Township, LaPorte County

I am delighted that the IN state government has approved the re-assessment of Michigan Township in LaPorte County. The Nexus Group who was hired by LaPorte County to do current assessments did such a poor job that they should be sued by the county rather than praised for their unrealistic, faulty work.

As an Indiana resident and taxpayer I can assure you that your action was not only proper but saved many residents of Michigan Township the heartbreak of having to sell their homes because they could no longer afford to own them. Tax increases of well over 100% in one year is cruel punishment for our fellow citizens to bear.

Attorney Shaw Friedman, LaPorte County's attorney does not speak for us when he states that we don't want a reassessment. We most definitely do want one, and his threat of a lawsuit against the state (using taxpayer money to file such a suit) is a blatant attempt to force the legislature to rescind their recent action.

Your courageous decision to recommend this action on the legislature's part shows all concerned citizens that our government can work for them

I gratefully thank you.

Fred Broitman
208 Louisiana
Michigan City, IN 42630

Fred Broitman
Sunman Direct
307 N. Michigan Avenue
Suite 824
Chicago, IL. 60601

312-726-3141 voice

5/8/2008

Rushenberg, Tim

From: Don Miller [canddmiller@yahoo.com]**Sent:** Thursday, May 08, 2008 3:37 PM**To:** Rushenberg, Tim

Mr. Tim Rushenberg, General Counsel
DLGF

We strongly support the reassessment of LaPorte County. We have been home owners at 1529 Lake Shore Drive in Michigan City since December 1995. As a young family, we made a down payment on a modest home across from Lake Michigan, where we could enjoy good family time on summer weekends and vacations. We paid \$106.88 per month for 25 years on the mortgage, until it was paid off. We chose that location because it was a favorite weekend spot for my parents, so I knew the area pretty well. This house is a one story aluminum sided house with a partial basement. The house is 528 square feet. It is about 70 years old. While the house is charming to us, it would probably be a "tear down" for any future owner. The parcel number of our property is 42-01-21-255-008.

The real estate taxes were reasonable until the last five years. They have doubled, then doubled, then doubled yet again in three of the last five years. We are now paying nearly \$8,000 annually, where we were paying \$796 in 2001. These real estate taxes have become a major portion of my monthly budget. Before 2001, the taxes were consistent. I realize that Indiana property tax litigation has changed the taxing methodology, but this kind of tax increase is unthinkable in our society. Here is a summary of the Michigan City taxes we have paid since 2000 (pay 2001):

2000	\$766.50	
2001	\$796.54	3.92% increase
2002	\$1,862.84	133.87% increase
2003	\$3,870.32	107.76% increase
2004	\$3,814.12	
2005	\$3,662.34	
2006	\$7,974.96	117.76% increase

Although we are not Indiana residents, we have many Indiana ties: My wife was born and raised in Indianapolis. My final duty assignment in the army was at Fort Benjamin Harrison in 1969 and 1970. I am retired from the Indiana Department of Revenue, where I was a tax auditor and manager in the Chicago office.

The assessment situation for our house has been very discouraging. It seems like the people on the lake shore are being discriminated against, because they are considered wealthy. Also, they seem to be an easy target, because they are not voters. It is a real shame to punish people from Illinois, who regular feed the economy of Northwest Indiana. Since 1975, we have been Indiana consumers, regularly purchasing: food, clothing, automotive supplies, movie tickets, meals at restaurants, etc..

Further, we are not wealthy. My wife and I are retired, and live on Social Security and modest retirement income. We had hoped to keep our beloved "Lake House" until we die, and then pass it on to our daughters. For the first time in 32 years, we have realized this dream may be out of reach. Our Michigan City taxes have put a severe strain on our budget. It is unlikely that our daughters will be able

5/8/2008

to pay the taxes in the future. Sadly, we have been considering that we may have to sell this property, which has provided so many memories for 32 years.

My wife, Connie, and I plan to attend your open meeting next Thursday. I would be happy to speak in favor of the reassessment at that time. We really appreciate the time and effort you have been putting into this issue, and hope you bring this to a fair and just conclusion.

Thank you,
Donald Miller
canddmiller@yahoo.com
(847) 915 8474 cell

730 Fairfield Lane
Algonquin, IL 60102

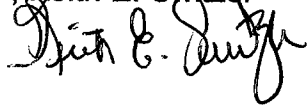
Be a better friend, newshound, and know-it-all with Yahoo! Mobile. Try it now.

May 9, 2008
Keith E. Switzer
100 Julianna Dr.
Michigan City, IN. 46360

Sir ,

As a lifelong resident and taxpayer of LaPorte County , I oppose another re-assessment of portions or all of LaPorte County . I feel that anyone who disagree's with their assessment has option's available to have their concern's heard by the appropriate government body. The DGLF need's to make a decision that will be of benefit to the majority of the taxpayer's , not a disgruntled few

Thank you , Keith E. Switzer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith E. Switzer", written over the printed name.

May 9, 2008

Department of Local Government Finance
Indiana Government Center North
100 North Senate Avenue N1058(B)
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Commissioner Musgrave:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the last property tax assessment performed in LaPorte County, Indiana.

My family owns and operates a manufactured housing business in Westville, Indiana. Our community of New Durham Estates consists of 412 residential properties, a sales lot, and hardware store. We maintain all the streets, as well as the water, sewer, and garbage services, within this community.

In the last property tax assessment, the assessment for New Durham Estates went from \$2,415,300.00 to \$6,309,700.00. When we asked our local officials why the assessed value had increased so much we were told that the increase was supported by the recent sales of two small vacant pieces of property near our community – one to a bank and another to a hospital. These sales took place well after January 1, 2005, when the valuation of New Durham Estates was supposedly determined. I point this out to you because it seems the DLGF's recent public meetings and resolution have focused on the problem of "sales chasing" in the *residential* market but not in the commercial market. My family's experience with New Durham Estates indicates that "sales chasing" was the assessor's practice for justifying the assessment of our property as well.

I am encouraged that the DLGF has taken the time and effort to listen to the citizens of LaPorte, and remain hopeful that commercial properties such as New Durham Estates will receive the same "sales chasing" scrutiny that has been applied in reviewing residential assessed values. New Durham Township was one of the nine townships that the DLGF identified in its resolution as having evidence of "sales chasing" in improved residential properties, it would not be a leap of faith to presume that the same tactics were used for other property classes in my township.

I realize that the decision regarding the scope of LaPorte's reassessment is a difficult one. But given the time, money and energy that the state and county have already spent on this task it would be unfortunate if the process stopped short of reviewing all classes of property, leaving LaPorte taxpayers such as myself wondering whether we had unfairly shouldered more than our share of taxes. It seems only fair and right that *all* property classes be equally scrutinized.

Thank you for listening to my concerns and I look forward to attending the next public meeting on May 15, 2008.

Sincerely,



Mel Fath

Owner – New Durham Estates

New Durham  Home Sales
New Durham Estates

Put your future in our homes

Junction of Routes 2 & 421, Westville, Indiana 46391
219~785~2576 fax 219~785~2428

Department of Local Government Finance
Attention: Commissioner Musgrave
100 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

May 11, 2008

Dear Commissioner Musgrave,

I am one of the many concerned taxpayers that spoke at the forum held in LaPorte on March 6th regarding the work performed by The Nexus Group. I write this letter to briefly outline the numerous errors, inconsistencies and outright disregard for the tax law I have experienced with my own real estate assessments in LaPorte County since 2004.

I have spent over \$100,000 in attorney and appraisal fees solely to get my real estate assessments correct. While attempting to navigate the assessment errors over the last four years I have been met with obstacles, questionable actions and power-struggles from The Michigan Township Assessor, The LaPorte County Assessor, The LaPorte County Attorney and The Nexus Group. The fact that these individuals and Firm cannot correctly assess property in LaPorte County has forced me to spend over \$100,000 and hundreds of hours of my time and my CFO's time.

My parents and I have lived and owned small businesses in LaPorte County for over fifty years. Our companies employ predominately LaPorte County residents, use local services and strive to benefit the community. We are now forced to divert our corporate efforts and spend additional time and money to do the work the Township Assessor, County Assessor and The Nexus Group were hired to do. My family owns residential, rental, vacant and industrial properties in Michigan Township all of which have had errors, inconsistencies or valuation problems. It appears that no class of property in LaPorte County is immune from errors and inconsistencies.

I will briefly outline below a FEW of my experiences over the past four years.

1. While reviewing the 2006 assessment on my Industrial property we asked Frank Kelly of Nexus how he determined his assessed value of \$30,000 per acre for Industrial land in Michigan Township. Mr. Kelly's email response said "We have no vacant land sales... that ended up at \$30,000." I subsequently spent \$2,000 on an appraisal and additional monies on attorney fees to ultimately have the Michigan Township Assessor change the assessed value to \$10,000 an acre.
2. For 2006 my Industrial building was assessed higher than the neighboring Industrial building even though my building is 50,000 square feet smaller. Both buildings are identical "Kit" buildings with identical interiors. I know this because I built both buildings. Upon comparing the tax cards for both properties, we identified that my office space was assessed at \$71.15 a foot and the identical neighboring building was assessed at \$21.16 a foot. My Industrial building's office space was incorrectly classified as

“General Office” instead of “Industrial Office” which is what the neighboring building was classified. We also identified that my warehouse was assessed at \$42.60 a foot and the identical neighboring building’s warehouse was assessed at \$20.15 a foot. I hired an appraiser and the Michigan Township Assessor subsequently changed my assessment to within \$3,000 of the appraisal. This changed the original assessment from \$2,002,000 to \$1,117,800.

3. I own nine parcels of adjacent vacant land near Hwy 212 in Michigan Township. The parcels are similar. It is difficult to tell when one parcel begins and the other ends. For 2006 the Assessor classified the parcels differently which created significantly different assessed values per acre. One parcel was classified as commercial, five parcels were classified residential and three were classified as agricultural. As a result of these classifications, the assessed values of these similar, adjacent parcels ranged from \$142 to \$30,000 an acre. I subsequently hired an appraiser and the Michigan Township Assessor agreed that the assessed value of the parcels should really be in the range of \$142 to \$3,000 an acre.
4. During a meeting with the Michigan Township Assessor I was told that The Nexus Group determined the depreciable life of properties on Lake Shore Drive by walking down the street in January and looking up at the homes in order to determine the effective year of construction. The Nexus Group did this instead of reviewing building permits. I own residential property on this street which was originally built in the 1930’s (remodeled in 1965) and for the 2006 assessment year has been given an effective year of construction of 1990 and only seven years of depreciation.
5. The Michigan Township Assessor and/or The Nexus Group refuse to develop a Gross Rent Multiplier (GRM) for my rental property in Duneland Beach because they say there is not enough information available. Nexus was able to develop a GRM for a similar beach rental community that is less than two miles down the road from my property.
6. In April 2006 I received a Form 113 from Michigan Township increasing my 2004 and 2005 residential rental property assessments \$270,000 each year. The reason indicated on the Form 113 was “Computer pricing error, pulled pricing from 1995 tables”. When asked, the Assessor said that they had computer problems with a few homes in that area. I was then sent an additional tax bill for each year.
7. The Michigan Township Assessor does not take a neighborhood’s lack of public services (i.e., no fire, police, sewer, or snow/garbage removal) into account when determining land assessments in the neighborhood.
8. The 2006 front foot rates on Lake Shore Drive in Ogden Dunes, Dune Acres and Beverly Shores in Porter County are \$3,025; \$2,481 and \$2,027 respectively. The 2006 front foot rates on Lake Shore Drive in Michigan Township range from \$7,000 to \$16,250 a front foot. Since they are all on Lake Michigan, why is there such a difference in assessed values in these neighboring Counties?

9. I met with The Michigan Township Assessor in August 2006 and presented him with the tax card of my neighbor that had his 2006 assessment changed as a result of an informal meeting with the Assessor and by using an outdated appraisal. The Assessor acknowledged accepting my neighbor's old appraisal and also acknowledged he applied a - 40% obsolescence factor to the tax card as a "plug" number to "get it to work". What makes this situation even more interesting, as if the old appraisal and the obsolescence factor are not enough, this home had been featured in the Chicago Tribune's Home Section.
10. The Michigan Township Assessor refused to break-out one of my residential lots because my driveway runs on it. Oddly, my neighbor is allowed to break-out a similar lot even though not only does their driveway run through it but a portion of their home resides on the lot they were able to break-out.
11. I have had a residential lot taxed as a front foot Lake Shore Drive lot for years even though this lot is not on Lake Shore Drive and I do not own the lot in front of it.
12. The Michigan Township Assessor refuses to make any changes to my assessments in Duneland Beach even though I present him with current appraisals that are USPAP compliant. In October 2007 I presented the Michigan Township Assessor with six USPAP compliant appraisals prepared by an appraiser, who the Michigan Township Assessor stated under oath that he "recognizes this appraiser as being an expert in appraising". Despite this statement and without giving any evidence to the contrary, the Michigan Township Assessor denied all six of my appraisals. I was then forced to spend additional time and money to appeal the parcels to the PTABOA level.
13. My most recent experience is by far the best example of the inconsistencies and incompetence in LaPorte County. On April 15, 2008 I had a hearing in front of the LaPorte PTABOA regarding six parcels I own in Duneland Beach. I appealed to the PTABOA because the Michigan Township Assessor refused to make any changes to my assessments at an informal meeting even though I had current USPAP compliant appraisals for each parcel.

At the PTABOA hearing my attorneys presented a 200 page binder of appraisals, exhibits and law. Each PTABOA member was given a binder containing this information two weeks in advance of my PTABOA hearing.

Two unbelievable things happened at that PTABOA hearing. (1) Neither the Michigan Township Assessor nor The Nexus Group presented any evidence to support the original assessments they placed on my parcels. They merely left it up to me to spend time and money to prove that their assessments were unfounded. (2) The LaPorte County Assessor came late to the hearing and although she heard less than 5 minutes of a nearly 50 minute presentation given by my attorney, **she voted against my appeal.**

Commissioner Musgrave, the real estate assessments in LaPorte County are a mess. What has occurred in Michigan Township is government at its worst. This is taxation without representation! What I have experienced is that the Assessor and Nexus merely put numbers on property record cards that have little to no factual basis. As a result, it becomes the taxpayer's burden to disprove their assessments. The errors, inconsistencies and disregard for the law permeate all classes of property. What has happened to me and others throughout Michigan Township should never be allowed to happen again. I urge you to order a complete reassessment of LaPorte County and remove those individuals and the Firm that created, allowed and benefited from this reprehensible situation.

I would be happy to discuss this matter further with you and can be reached at 219-874-5248.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. Keith Sandin". The signature is fluid and extends to the right with a long, sweeping underline.

R. Keith Sandin

2911 Roslyn Trail
Long Beach, Indiana 46360
May 8, 2008

Mr. Timothy Rushenberg
General Council
Department of Local Government Finance
100 N Senate Avenue - Room N1058
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Dear Mr. Rushenberg:

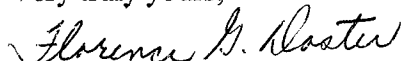
The following is in addition to my letter to you dated May 6, 2008.

There appeared in the local newspaper, The News Dispatch, an article dated May 8, 2008 whereby Atty Shaw Friedman stated that he was filing a petition to fight any reassessment order from the DLGF. It was stated by Atty Shaw Friedman that a reassessment would be a hardship for the taxpayers of LaPorte County because it would delay the 2006 homestead rebate checks and further delay this year's tax bills. My question is this, how could it be a hardship for 90% of the property owners in LaPorte County when their taxes either remained the same or were reduced. My homestead tax rebate check only amounts to \$154.30 which is a drop in the bucket when compared to the increase in my property taxes from \$2,174.50 to \$4,812.72. Also in the same article it stated that provisional tax statements were going to be mailed out based on 2006 taxes. That means that I will be paying the same increase in my property taxes if not more according to the valuation report I received from the Assessor's Office which stated that my taxes will go up another 67%.

The county has \$2 million in a reassessment fund plus another \$10 million emergency reserve fund which could pay for the reassessment. The County Assessor already spent \$2 million to the Nexus Group for the debacle they caused LaPorte County.

I feel LaPorte County has to be fair to all its citizens and the property tax system as it is formulated now is not equitable to all.

Very truly yours,



Florence G. Doster

Rushenberg, Tim

From: tonyjones@artic.edu
Sent: Tuesday, May 13, 2008 4:14 PM
To: Musgrave, Cheryl
Cc: Rushenberg, Tim; Wood, Barry
Subject: LaPorte County Reassessment

Dear Commissioner Musgrave:

I am fully aware that you are about to be insulted, harassed, attacked and cursed by the the McDaniel-Nexus-Friedman axis. You already know strong effort is being made to jam the DLGF meeting with country staff, employees and representatives to try to stop re-assessment. Your sound judgement and objective professionalism, and that of your colleagues, will be called into question, and offensive remarks will be made the vulgar opponents of justice and equality. Their panic over the possibility of their incompetence being revealed has reached an hysterical pitch. Why ? Because "Something stinks" - and the DLGF can smell it as well as we do.

Be strong. Do the right thing. As Representative Ken Layton said last week: "No-one wants a re-assessment, but if something is wrong (with the original assessment) it needs to be fixed".

And that's the whole story, in a nutshell.

Respectfully yours,

Tony Jones

Rushenberg, Tim

From: David Maslowski [dmaz315@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, May 15, 2008 10:47 AM
To: Rushenberg, Tim
Subject: The Tax and Reassessment

Dear Mr. Rushenberg;

My wife (Joelle) and I would like to share with you our feelings on the recently increased tax levies. I will summarize our frustrations in the ensuing paragraphs and bullet points.

We have been married for 8 years (my 2nd marriage). We have 4 kids and 2 grandkids. I am 51 and Joelle is 41. I have been a "working class stiff" for most of my life, and at age 39 was able to land my "dream" job. In late 2005, my corporate option package (which I worked very hard to secure) vested and we chose to use the money to settle some debt and to invest. We chose to "INVEST" in Indiana real estate. Yes it is a 2nd home, but it is a home to which we had hoped to retire. One of the principal reasons we chose Michigan City, was the fact that it is close to our family in the Chicago area, and it appeared to be valued and taxed reasonably. I guess we were wrong!

Our home in the Shoreland Hills subdivision is a new construction located 2 blocks south of the beach at the corner of Moore Road and Westgate Way. We loved it and thought it had everything we were looking for to generate the memories we hoped to make both now and after we retired there! Notre Dame Church was just a few blocks south, the beach a couple of blocks north, and great shopping and dining nearby, and most importantly, close proximity to Chicago, where I have a large close family and many friends! The home and property were valued at \$563,000 by the assessors. I received a tax escrow shortage letter via federal express 2 weeks ago from my bank for \$12,998.00. You can be sure I was shocked and dismayed. My home in Orland Park IL is valued at a similar amount, and is currently being taxed at approx \$9200 per year, and we are appealing that tax, but that is a whole separate story (IL Governor Blagojevich has a similarly valued home which had an increased tax assessment of 1% while mine increased 35%)! Between the 2 homes, we will be assessed almost \$23,000 per year, which may force us to choose where we will sell a home! I think you know which way I would be leaning, based on the preceding paragraphs and assessments!

Finally, we have had a desire to possibly invest in some rental property in the area, in an effort to supplement potential retirement income down the road, but we have put those plans on indefinite hold (See Debbie Jakelski, Coldwell Banker in New Buffalo)! Additionally, we have a significant number of friends between the ages of 35 and 55 who have visited and/or stayed with us the past 2 years, and many HAD been considering possible purchase. They are also shocked, and given the depressed real estate market and the fact that they are also raising young children (future college needs etc), they have also decided to wait and see if the Indiana legislature and county assessor do the right thing! See below for bullet summary:

1. Dave and Joelle likely to sell Westgate home when real estate market rebounds.
2. Dave and Joelle's friends most likely will not consider Michigan City area lakefront for future purchases, and we have 4 families and friends who were more than casually interested.
3. Dave and Joelle will likely not retire to area in next 10 years, thereby losing future potential income from consumption of needed products and services.
4. Dave and Joelle will definitely not purchase property for investment and/or rental, until IN legislature and assessors consider and assess a much more palatable tax.

5/19/2008

5. Most importantly, our children will be literally robbed of the beautiful beachfront memories we hoped to make for them, due to this most unfair taxation.

In closing, in an effort to tax and raise capital for the rest of the state, the IN legislature has ROBBED the "average Joe" (me/us) of an opportunity to make and live out some of our most cherished future goals and dreams! While we are not poor by any stretch, we were both raised in working class families, and we thought we followed all the rules, which may now deprive us of our much anticipated dreams for retirement and for our families. I am hoping the work of this committee can help us, but also many others who face similar challenges. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best Regards,
David Maslowski
708-226-5710

Ma just want
a that works.
y, I believe a
ssment is in
but would start
H 2007.

Sincerely,
marion ballas

A Special Note...

BLOCKSOM & CO.

Corporate Offices

450 St. John Rd. - Suite 710
P.O. Box 2007
Michigan City, Indiana 46361-8007

Phone: 219-874-3231
Fax: 219-874-9785

May 12, 2008

Timothy J. Rushenberg
General Counsel
Department of Local Government Finance
Indiana Government Center North
100 N. Senate Avenue, Room N1058
Indianapolis, IN 46204

**RE: Excessive assessment of Blocksom & Co. property in Michigan Township,
LaPorte County**

Dear Mr. Rushenberg:

Please consider this correspondence as part of the public hearing comments for the May 15, 2008 session in LaPorte County.

Blocksom & Co. owns seven parcels of Commercial Improved real property in a single tract of land located in Michigan Township, LaPorte County, Indiana. The 2006, pay 2007 assessment of the property is excessive. The assessment uses land values of \$70,000 or \$541,650 per acre for a total land value of \$2,949,400. Although the property includes improvements, the land values constitute the majority of the excessive assessment.

All seven parcels are physically located within tax neighborhood Area 12 Commercial. The assessor used a land value of \$70,000 per acre for this neighborhood. However, four of the parcels were erroneously assigned to tax neighborhood Blue Chip and were assessed at \$541,650 per acre.

A timely appeal was filed on our behalf by our property tax consultant. During the preliminary meeting, the township assessor and Nexus Group declined to change the assessment and defended the value based on a market value appraisal for a marina-condominium highest and best use. The actual use of the property is light manufacturing.

As you are aware, Indiana Code defines the true tax value as market value-in-use. Blocksom & Co. identified several LaPorte County comparable land sales for the years 2004-2005 that show Commercial Improved land selling in a range of \$8,000 to \$18,000 per acre. Using an average of \$13,000 per acre, the 9.257 acres of land would be assessed at \$120,341. The assessment exceeds this figure by \$2,829,059.

The errors in the assessment include:

1. Assigning four parcels to the wrong tax neighborhood.
2. Assessment based on market value appraisal for an alternate use instead of market value-in-use.

Filtration Products Division


420 East Fifth Street
Michigan City, Indiana 46360
Phone: 219-878-4455
Fax: 219-874-3752

3. Failure to use available comparable land sales to establish market value-in-use.

Blocksom & Co. overpaid approximately \$90,000 in taxes due to the excessive assessment. The errors in assessment caused the company to devote additional time and financial resources as we pursue an appeal.

We respectfully request a reassessment of Commercial Improved property in Michigan Township. We believe it is also appropriate for your office to order the township or county assessor to reimburse Blocksom & Co. for the actual and reasonable expenses of the appeal and cost of funds paid in excess of true tax value.

Sincerely,
BLOCKSOM & CO.


Andrew Swan
President

Rec'd 15 May 08
TJR

As the Secretary for the Tryon Farm Homeowner's Association, a group of 56 homeowners in Michigan City, I don't have the statistical sophistication of either of the gentlemen at the heart of this argument, but have frequently been asked to address the question of 2006 property assessments for those fifty-six homes. Trying to answer the homeowners' questions I compared two sets of appraisals for the subset of the units that were taxed for 2006 pay 2007: the insured value of the unit (based on the insurance company's appraisal of the units), and the assessed value for 2006 as shown on the LaPorte County Assessor's Office website¹. Since Tryon Farm is a horizontal property development, land values do not contribute to differences in individual unit values.

As you can see from the attached table, the assessed values of the compared units average 153% of replacement cost, ranging from 104 to 266 percent. I believe these differences are legitimately smaller or larger based on their construction and their location in different 'neighborhoods' or 'settlements' within the development, something that could not be obvious from the numbers themselves.

What stands out is that I have no more reason to question the tax assessments of these units than I have for questioning the insurance appraisals, and that I see no meaningful difference between the assessed value and market values of those units two years ago. Some are slightly higher or lower than I expected, but I can see no more variation in the 2006 assessments than in insurance company appraisals.

If this is true of the entire county, and I suspect it is, the question should be, "What is to be gained from a reassessment?" Some property assessment will be lowered, some will be raised – the same result that can be achieved through the appeal process.

But what will be lost? First, LaPorte County taxpayers will bear the estimated \$2,000,000 cost of the reassessment. Second, at a time when the Federal Government is hurrying to distribute tax rebate checks to ward off a recession, 30,000 homeowners in LaPorte County will see their property tax rebate checks delayed even further. And after all that, we stand a good chance of ending up back here with a different group of homeowners asking for yet another reassessment.

Wouldn't it be wiser to admit that property assessments are estimates, never 100% accurate, and use the \$2,000,000 required for a reassessment to provide sufficient staff to efficiently deal with the backlog of appeals, help offset the rising cost of gas and food by getting those 30,000 tax rebate checks distributed, and start preparing for 2007 pay 2008 taxes?

I have attached the numbers I used for your perusal.

Sam Harnish
Secretary
Tryon Farm Homeowners Association

¹ <http://www.xsoftin.com/laporte/parcelsearch.aspx>

Unit	Insured Value	2006 Assessment	Difference	% of Insured Value	Mean % Difference	% Difference From Mean
8	119,833.33	188,800.00	68,966.67	158	153	4
9	119,833.33	181,800.00	61,966.67	152	153	(2)
10	119,833.33	188,900.00	69,066.67	158	153	4
11	211,600.00	219,500.00	7,900.00	104	153	(50)
12	75,000.00	199,400.00	124,400.00	266	153	112
13	221,000.00	240,500.00	19,500.00	109	153	(45)
14	221,000.00	260,200.00	39,200.00	118	153	(36)
15	255,000.00	277,600.00	22,600.00	109	153	(45)
16	221,000.00	267,000.00	46,000.00	121	153	(33)
20	255,000.00	293,800.00	38,800.00	115	153	(38)
21	221,000.00	254,600.00	33,600.00	115	153	(38)
23	255,000.00	290,800.00	35,800.00	114	153	(39)
24	246,000.00	295,900.00	49,900.00	120	153	(33)
25	221,000.00	255,300.00	34,300.00	116	153	(38)
26	221,600.00	288,400.00	66,800.00	130	153	(23)
28	77,000.00	188,800.00	111,800.00	245	153	92
30	320,000.00	419,300.00	99,300.00	131	153	(22)
34	242,000.00	327,300.00	85,300.00	135	153	(18)
40	161,000.00	296,000.00	135,000.00	184	153	30
43	161,000.00	295,100.00	134,100.00	183	153	30
44	189,000.00	295,300.00	106,300.00	156	153	3
45	129,500.00	227,100.00	97,600.00	175	153	22
46	246,000.00	321,100.00	75,100.00	131	153	(23)
47	225,000.00	412,400.00	187,400.00	183	153	30
48	161,000.00	297,000.00	136,000.00	184	153	31
50	75,000.00	129,800.00	54,800.00	173	153	20
51	85,000.00	139,700.00	54,700.00	164	153	11
52	75,000.00	128,800.00	53,800.00	172	153	18
53	85,000.00	140,000.00	55,000.00	165	153	11
54	85,000.00	140,400.00	55,400.00	165	153	12
64	161,000.00	288,100.00	127,100.00	179	153	25
66	130,600.00	154,900.00	24,300.00	119	153	(35)
67	162,300.00	284,200.00	121,900.00	175	153	22
68	190,600.00	203,100.00	12,500.00	107	153	(47)
70	255,000.00	451,200.00	196,200.00	177	153	23
71	255,000.00	396,000.00	141,000.00	155	153	2
80	189,000.00	247,700.00	58,700.00	131	153	(22)
81	129,500.00	213,400.00	83,900.00	165	153	11
82	161,000.00	304,800.00	143,800.00	189	153	36
84	120,000.00	230,000.00	110,000.00	192	153	38
Mean	180,876.92	262,410.26	81,533.33	153		

February, 15, 2008

Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals
LaPorte County

JERRY ELENZ
2000 Berwyn Avenue
Michigan City, Indiana 46360
Phone: (219) 874-8272
E-Mail: jlb2elenz@adsnet.com

Ref: County Property Tax Assessment Board of Appeals hearing for Elenz, Jerrold & Elisabeth on February 13, 2008, 2:00 PM, petition number 46-023-06-0-5-00068.

At the referenced board meeting, Terry Beckinger, Michigan Township Assessor, submitted as proof of vacant land sales value, documents for parcel number 45-01-15-457/031, which I noted the board considered and discussed at some length. In fact, the sale value of this parcel is not representative of my property since it is within one half block of Lake Shore Drive, has a lake view and thus carries the \$6600 base rate rather than the Berwyn Ave. \$2550 base rate. At a subsequent Thursday, February 14th meeting, Mr Beckinger acknowledged this error, but offered no explanation for misleading the board.

I note also from the Sales Data Summary document for Michigan Township, that of the six Long Beach parcels that sold in this period (in the \$2550 base rate area), that four sold substantially below the \$2550 figure and only two sold above. Mr. Beckinger selected one of these two higher priced parcels to present as his second evidence to the board and ignored the four lower valued properties which sold during this period for \$1833, \$1333, \$1556, and \$1528/FF. It also should be noted that these properties are all buildable lots and my lots are non-buildable.

Furthermore, at this later Thursday meeting, Mr. Beckinger acknowledged that there is no available sales data for the period 2004-2005 for non-buildable vacant lots in Long Beach.

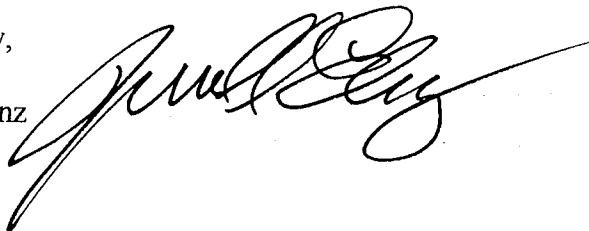
I also find it questionable that this board attempted to combine non-buildable parcels into a buildable parcel for the purpose of deliberation and setting tax values.

I also find it offensive that a board member questioned my future purpose for the properties. I have owned this property for more than 20 years and have maintained it as one of the few green spaces in Long Beach and intend to do so in the future. But, this is not the business of this board.

I believe for these reasons, that this board should conduct another hearing on my properties after June 1st when appraisal, survey and other technical assistance is available to me.

Yours truly,

Jerrold Elenz



Rushenberg, Tim

From: EveNoon@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, May 17, 2008 3:42 PM
To: Musgrave, Cheryl; Wood, Barry; Rushenberg, Tim
Subject: Yes, you are probably sick of all this!!

We salute you for taking on the difficult property tax situation in La Porte County. We feel the case has been made that the assessments were done incorrectly. We hope you will stick to your plan to get this thing done correctly and fairly this time. No one likes to pay taxes, everyone likes the services those taxes provide and it is absolutely essential that the process be done fairly. Thanks loads for all your time and good sense on this issue. It will be a big project but it is right to reassess.

eve and ed noonan
207 Georgia
Mich City IN
(also developers and architects of
Mich City's Tryon Farm)

Wondering what's for Dinner Tonight? Get new twists on family favorites at AOL Food.
(<http://food.aol.com/dinner-tonight?NCID=aolfod00030000000001>)

Rushenberg, Tim

From: Mike O'Mahoney [omahoneym@aol.com]
Sent: Saturday, May 17, 2008 10:56 PM
To: LaporteReassessment; Musgrave, Cheryl; Wood, Barry; Rushenberg, Tim
Subject: Reluctant Hoosier.

Commissioner Musgrave, Director Wood, General Counsel Rushenberg

I would like to briefly add my voice to what I assume is a mounting chorus of Michigan Township property owners, and urge you to live up to the values espoused in your mission statment; to wit, to vote in favor of a reassessment of Michigan township for tax year 2006, pay 2007.

"Committed to a fair and equitable property tax system for Hoosier taxpayers."

Michael T. O'Mahoney, PhD
Associate Professor (retired)
Psychiatry
Northwestern University Medical School

307 Beachwalk Lane
Michigan City, Indiana 46360

Plan your next roadtrip with MapQuest.com: America's #1 Mapping Site.

Rushenberg, Tim

From: LaporteReassessment
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2008 7:53 AM
To: Edw E Fioretti FIORETTI
Cc: Musgrave, Cheryl
Subject: RE: New Assessment

Mr. Fioretti:

Thank you for submitting your thoughts and comments on a possible reassessment to the Department of Local Government Finance. As you can see, I have copied Commissioner Musgrave on this e-mail and I'm sure she will take your comments into consideration.

Barry Wood

Director, Assessment Division

Department of Local Government Finance

100 N. Senate Ave, Room #N1058

Indianapolis, IN 46204

P 317.232.3762

F 317.232.8779

E-mail: Bwood@dlgf.in.gov

www.in.gov/dlgf/

-----Original Message-----

From: Edw E Fioretti FIORETTI [mailto:happy-bottom@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Saturday, May 17, 2008 2:35 PM
To: LaporteReassessment
Subject: New Assessment

My taxes in 10 years has increased 1700%.

Yes I am in favor of reassessment.

Edward Fioretti

1825 LSD

Michigan City, In 46360

5/19/2008

Rushenberg, Tim

From: Musgrave, Cheryl
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2008 7:55 AM
To: Rushenberg, Tim
Subject: FW: meeting

file

From: omahoneyl@aol.com [mailto:omahoneyl@aol.com]
Sent: Friday, May 16, 2008 10:02 PM
To: Musgrave, Cheryl
Subject: meeting

Thank you for working on the behalf of the taxpayers. Though a lot of the statistical discussion was beyond my comprehension, I think you understand the burden the current tax situation has on the citizens of Laporte County..

I encourage you to please order a reassessment in order to achieve a more reasonable tax structure.

Linda O'Mahoney
307 Beachwalk Lane
Michigan City, IN

Plan your next roadtrip with MapQuest.com: America's #1 Mapping Site.

5/19/2008

Rushenberg, Tim

From: vbrizgys@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, May 20, 2008 10:03 AM
To: undisclosed-recipients
Subject: Laporte County Reassessment

Vote yes for a reassessment. I own 2 properties in LaPorte County. All my neighbors and friends are suffering unwarranted disproportionate increases. Can they all be wrong? Northwest Indiana really dropped the ball on this.

Vincent Brizgys
Long Beach

Rushenberg, Tim

From: LaporteReassessment
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2008 7:49 AM
To: Greg Kelter; Musgrave, Cheryl
Cc: Rushenberg, Tim; Dermody, Tom; Jim Arnold
Subject: RE: LaPorte County Reassessment

Mr. Kelter:

Thank you for submitting your thoughts and comments on sales chasing and a possible reassessment in LaPorte County to the Department of Local Government Finance. I'm sure Commissioner Musgrave will take your comments into consideration when making her decision.

Barry Wood
 Director, Assessment Division
 Department of Local Government Finance
 100 N. Senate Ave, Room #N1058
 Indianapolis, IN 46204
 P 317.232.3762
 F 317.232.8779
 E-mail: Bwood@dlgf.in.gov
 www.in.gov/dlgf/

-----Original Message-----

From: Greg Kelter [mailto:kelter@csinet.net]
 Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2008 5:34 AM
 To: LaporteReassessment; Musgrave, Cheryl
 Cc: Wood, Barry; Rushenberg, Tim; Dermody, Tom; Jim Arnold
 Subject: LaPorte County Reassessment

Dear Ms. Musgrave,

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to straighten out the reassessment mess in LaPorte County. Although I was not able to attend the most recent DLGF hearing in LaPorte County to personally comment, I have watched the meeting on the ALCO-TV website. I have appreciated the way the DLGF has conducted the hearings in LaPorte County as well as the materials that have been made available to the public on the DLGF website. I also greatly appreciate your recent oversight review of the contract that was executed between Nexus and LaPorte County. As a fed-up LaPorte County Taxpayer who feels "waterboarded" by the LaPorte County Assessor, the County Attorney, and consultants retained by the LaPorte County Commissioners, I would strongly encourage the DLGF to order the total reassessment of LaPorte County.

Personally, I am a homeowner and small business owner in Noble Township. At the previous DLGF Hearing, I submitted a copy of the property tax appeal that my attorney has filed with the LaPorte County Assessor for my home at 2702 W. 950 S. in Union Mills. Mann-Whitney/statistical analysis stuff aside, as a reasonable man, I believe that there is a 100% probability that sales chasing has taken place with my property tax reassessment. The next-door residential property at 2652 W 950 S. in Union Mills which was not sold until 7/7/06 had the '2006 AV adjusted to \$67,700 from a 2005 AV of \$56,400. That

5/21/2008

represents an increase of 20.0%. However my similar residential property located at 2702 W. 950 S. which was purchased on 10/20/05 had the 2006 AV adjusted to \$149,200 from the 2005 AV of \$78,600. That is an increase of *89.8%*. While I am assessed at 93.8% of the sale price, the property next-door is assessed at only 42.3% of the sale price that occurred just 6 months later. That certainly does not meet any reasonable standard of uniform and equal.

According to the "Tab E" material available at <http://www.in.gov/dlgf/2577.htm> "Sales Chasing -Unless similar unsold parcels are reappraised at the same level as sold parcels, sales chasing causes inequitable treatment of taxpayers by shifting the burden to taxpayers who have recently purchased property"

In the cases of many LaPorte County Taxpayers who are victims of sales chasing, absolutely no relief from that inequitable treatment will be available from the PTBOA appeals process. Only a correct reassessment of ALL improperly valued other property can remedy that unequal tax burden. With the obvious problems in the reassessment process in LaPorte County, I believe the only way for property taxpayers to have the uniform and equal assessment required by Indiana's Constitution is for the DLGF to order the *total* reassessment of LaPorte County. In order to restore some degree of public faith in the property tax assessment process for LaPorte County, I would respectfully urge you to order that action without any further delay.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion.

Greg Kelter
2702 W. 950 S.
Union Mills, IN 46382
(219) 324-4229

Rushenberg, Tim

From: LaporteReassessment
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2008 1:59 PM
To: John Parro
Cc: Jim/John Laughlin/Leinweber; Musgrave, Cheryl
Subject: RE: My Horror Story

Mr. Parro:

I have forwarded these comments on to Commissioner Musgrave for her consideration as well.

Barry Wood

From: John Parro [mailto:jparro@iname.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2008 6:47 PM
To: LaporteReassessment
Cc: Jim/John Laughlin/Leinweber
Subject: My Horror Story

I strongly favor a re-assessment of real estate tax values in LaPorte County and Michigan Township. The PTDA board approved a value of a home four blocks away from my home, on the lake side of Lake Shore Drive that is twice the size of mine in square footage and twice the size of mine relative to lot size and my home is priced the same as my neighbor. I failed in my attempt to reduce my value at my PTDA board meeting because the board said they may have made a mistake with my neighbor. This is just not fair. I strongly urge another re-assessment to be done fairly throughout the county.

Thank you.



John Parro
2424 Lake Shore Dr.
Long Beach, IN 46360

Cell: 312-498-0409
Fax: 312-993-5654

5/22/2008

Rushenberg, Tim

From: LaporteReassessment
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2008 1:56 PM
To: mike-sanders@verizon.net
Cc: Musgrave, Cheryl
Subject: RE: Possible Reassessment

Mr. Sanders:

Thank you for submitting your comments and information on a possible reassessment to the Department of Local Government Finance. As you can see, I have copied Commissioner Musgrave on this e-mail and I'm sure she will take your comments into consideration.

Barry Wood
Director, Assessment Division
Department of Local Government Finance
100 N. Senate Ave, Room #N1058
Indianapolis, IN 46204
P 317.232.3762
F 317.232.8779
E-mail: Bwood@dlgf.in.gov
www.in.gov/dlgf/

-----Original Message-----

From: mike-sanders@verizon.net [mailto:mike-sanders@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2008 5:28 PM
To: LaporteReassessment
Subject: Possible Reassessment

Department of Local Government Finance

After attending the public hearing in LaPorte on Thurs May 15th, I decided I should comment after all. First off, I compliment all of you for your extreme professionalism.

I own just a few properties; my home in the county, a rental house plus my auto repair shop in the city. I did appeal the rental, which was taken care of by Mike Schultz in less than 3 weeks. The process in his office, with my documentation, took all of 10 minutes. I am still waiting to hear from Steve Lestinsky on my extra .82 acre adjoining my home, which went from \$2500 to \$7700... much higher than the surrounding neighbors. This appeal was filed January 25th. I do understand if we have a reassessment, the appeals completed already are null & void. That's O.K.

My opinion is, the whole county should be reassessed, not just certain townships. The reason being is Nexus is responsible for the complete job, and who's to say that only the people screaming (like me) are the only parcels incorrectly done? I believe they need to start over and redo all of it. I also think that they should have to take care of their mistakes; in other words, at no charge. And our attorney, hired by our elected, I don't think is looking out for the public as a whole. He's constantly blaming this mess on just a handful of Michigan Township residents. That's baloney.

5/22/2008

In my industry, an automobile recall concerns ALL of certain models of vehicles, not just certain colors, for example. And, the manufacturer makes the repairs for no charge to the consumer. Likewise, there should be a full reassessment of the whole county, and it should be done without additional cost to the residents.

Michael K. Sanders
Mike's Auto Service
110 Glover Ct.
LaPorte, IN 46350

5/22/2008

Rushenberg, Tim

From: LaporteReassessment
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2008 1:53 PM
To: Tad60435@aol.com
Cc: Musgrave, Cheryl
Subject: RE: (no subject)

Mr. Dunn:

Thank you for submitting your comments on a possible reassessment to the Department of Local Government Finance. As you can see, I have copied Commissioner Musgrave on this e-mail and I'm sure she will take your comments into consideration.

Barry
Wood
Director, Assessment
Division
Department of Local Government
Finance
100 N. Senate Ave, Room
#N1058
Indianapolis, IN
46204
P
317.232.3762
F
317.232.8779
E-mail:
Bwood@dlgf.in.gov
www.in.gov/dlgf/

From: Tad60435@aol.com [mailto:Tad60435@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2008 3:43 PM
To: LaporteReassessment
Subject: (no subject)

keep up the great work in behalf of the people who have been wronged. tom dunn

Get trade secrets for amazing burgers. Watch "Cooking with Tyler Florence" on AOL Food.

5/22/2008

Rushenberg, Tim

From: LaporteReassessment
Sent: Thursday, May 22, 2008 1:50 PM
To: nancy t
Cc: Musgrave, Cheryl
Subject: RE: Erroneous Assessments in the 1500 Block of LSD in Michigan Township.

Ms. Thill:

Thank you for submitting your information and comments on a possible reassessment to the Department of Local Government Finance. As you can see, I have copied Commissioner Musgrave on this e-mail and I'm sure she will take your comments into consideration.

Barry
Wood

Director, Assessment

Division
Finance
Department of Local Government
100 N. Senate Ave, Room
#N1058
Indianapolis, IN
46204

P

317.232.3762

F

317.232.8779

E-mail:

Bwood@dlgf.in.gov

www.in.gov/dlgf/

From: nancy t [mailto:nlcottage@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2008 10:15 AM
To: LaporteReassessment
Subject: Erroneous Assessments in the 1500 Block of LSD in Michigan Township.

Dear DLGF Commission:

Thank you for reviewing this information. Below, please find information concerning the probable incorrect tabulation of land value in Michigan Township:

1851 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 229 014 sold in July, 2005 for \$335,000 and is the only sale used to compute land value for the 71 parcels in the neighborhood the Assessor identifies as Hillside Lakeshore Drive (LSD) for the 2006 pay 2007 tax year.

However, in June of 2003, the 120' lot next door at 1857 LSD was sold for \$480,000 and subdivided into 3, 40' lots that sold for \$160,000 each. We've asked the Assessor to consider including this data in the land value, and to recalculate the front footage of Hillside LSD, thereby reducing this value on every property along Hillside LSD. This is pending in a continuance, based on my appeal for 1509 LSD 42 01 21 255 003, currently in front of the PTABOA. The error of only using the one sale for 1851 LSD, places the assessed land value at a level that is too high for all the properties, including the parcels

5/22/2008

listed below.

1501 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 001. Assessed valuation was reduced from \$590,000 to \$520,000 although the property owner had a certified appraisal for \$500,000.

1505 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 002. Sales Chasing occurred on this property which was listed for sale FURNISHED @ \$659,000. On March 1, 2006 property was assessed, most likely from the MLS, at \$657,500. On March 31, 2006 the property was sold furnished for \$640,000. The value should be much less, because taxing personal property in the form of contents is illegal. I'm attaching the listing sheet for this sold property, which states: "Furniture and furnishings included" at the bottom right of the page.

1509 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 003. The 1924 building valuation is too high. The land valuation is too high for this property, based on insufficient sales data for the neighborhood. There has been a certified appraisal presented to the PTABOA board for \$390,000. The appeal is currently in continuance. I expect them to deny the appraisal. The only improvement to this building was the addition of a deck in 2003. There has been no new development of the house since its construction in 1924. The original 1920s wiring, plumbing, Beaver Board walls and kitchen are still in use. Why is it then, taxes on this property have risen from \$1136 in 2001 to \$9948 in 2007? Seems very disproportionate.

1517 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 005. There is a 15% influence factor on this double lot. Other double lots on Hillside are 25% or more. The land valuation is too high for this property based on insufficient sales data for the neighborhood.

1521 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 006 & 7. The building is much lower than other properties despite being more recently developed and having greater square footage, which would mean the other parcels on the block are overvalued. The land valuation is too high for this property based on insufficient sales data for the neighborhood.

1529 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 008. The building valuation is too high. The land valuation is too high for this property, based on insufficient sales data for the neighborhood.

1533 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 009. Again the land valuation is too high for this property, based on insufficient sales data for the neighborhood.

136 Turner Court, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 012. This assessment was overturned on appeal @ PTABOA because the Joyce family was billed at LSD frontage foot rate, despite being a half lot, with no access to LSD and a legal address of Turner Court. This property remains over-assessed still @ the new value of \$300,000 compared to the new property and building 5 lots up on Turner Court at \$180,000 on a full lot (I do not currently have that address for this email). However, the Joyce family will now need to submit a new appeal in an attempt to correct the value of their building. Also, This lot is split with 1537 (listed below), combining the two land values of the two lots: \$287,040 + \$209,800 = \$496,800. This total exceeds the value per frontage foot of the neighboring lots for the neighborhood.

1537 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 010. This lot is split with 136 Turner Court (listed above), combining the two land values of the two lots: \$287,040 + \$209,800 = \$496,800. This total exceeds the value per frontage foot of the neighboring lots for the neighborhood.

1537"B" LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 025. New building constructed in 1999. The address is incorrectly listed as 1937 LSD and is a duplicate. The building used for the tax card is from the "real"

1937 LSD owned by Yates, 42 01 21 229 029 (Photo attached below). Please note: the same building is shown on both tax cards. <http://www.xsoftin.com/laporte/printparceldetail.aspx?num=42%2001%2021%20255%20025> . The land valuation is too high for this property, based on insufficient sales data for the neighborhood.

1539 LSD, Michigan Township 42 01 21 255 014. The building valuation is too high. The land valuation is too high for this property, based on insufficient sales data for the neighborhood.

I would like to add, I am not a statistician. However the inequities and errors on the assessments for my block are self-evident. If the assessments on all the parcels for one block in one neighborhood of LaPorte county are erroneous, would it be inaccurate to suggest the balance of parcels in my neighborhood are as well?

At this point, it seems only a full reassessment of LaPorte county will satisfy these errors, and remove the burden from pocket areas targeted by the Assessor within the county. I'd like to propose the following:

A total boots-on-the-ground reassessment of LaPorte county.

Thank you for your time and efforts in assuring uniform and equitable property taxation according to Article 10 of the Indiana Constitution in LaPorte County, Indiana.

Sincerely,
Nancy Thill

PS: I'm inserting the welcome to Indiana billboard on I-90. The Bureau of Economic Affairs might wish to be apprised of their marketing over-promise. :-)